

Virginia National Guard cuts ribbon at new headquarters

Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, members of the Virginia Defense Force, friends and family members joined distinguished guests at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Virginia National Guard's newly-built Joint Force Headquarters building May 14, 2018, at Defense Supply Center Richmond in Chesterfield County, Virginia. U.S. Senator Mark Warner, First Lady of Virginia Pamela Northam, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran and Brig. Gen. Linda S. Hurry, commander of Defense Supply Center Richmond, joined Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, and Command Sgt. Maj. Alan Ferris, Virginia National Guard Senior Enlisted Leader, in forming the official party who cut the ribbon on the new facility. The 102,000 square foot, \$30 million building is the first structure purpose-built to serve as a headquarters for the Virginia National Guard in its 411 year history.

"In many ways, today is a reunion," Williams said. "I see so many familiar faces from across the decades which helps me put all of this in perspective. Generations of Guardsmen have dreamt of having a headquarters that they could call home."

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/05/14/11394/>



Elected officials join military leaders in cutting the ribbon on the new Virginia National Guard Joint Force Headquarters May 14, 2018, at Defense Supply Center Richmond in Chesterfield County, Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Epperly takes command of 29th Infantry Division

Brig. Gen. John M. Epperly took command of the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. Blake C. Ortner during a traditional change of command ceremony May 5, 2018, at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/05/06/11389/>

VDF supports local law enforcement at Winchester festival

Members of the Virginia Defense Force operated traffic control points and provided mission command support May 4-5, 2018, at the 91st Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester, Virginia.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/05/07/11404/>

Officer candidates prep for final phase of OCS

Officer candidates from Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and Washington, D.C., spent a long weekend in May preparing for the third and final phase of Officer Candidate School during a regional Field Level Exercise held May 4-6, 2018, at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/05/07/11396/>

203rd RED HORSE welcomes new commander

Lt. Col. J. Stock Dinsmore relinquished command of the 203rd RED HORSE Squadron to Lt. Col. Jeffrey E. Getz during a change of command ceremony April 14, 2018, at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/05/03/11407/>

Did You Know?

Registration Open for 2018 Virginia National Guard Youth Camp

The Annual Virginia National Guard Youth Camp has opened registration for the 2018 summer session to be held July 22-27, 2018, at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The Youth Camp targets 8-12 year old dependents of current National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from around Virginia. This 6-day, overnight camp has a broad range of educational, team-oriented and resilience building activities designed to foster growth and community in the National Guard. As a part of the theme this year, campers will learn about heroes at home and in our world.

For more information, visit <https://go.usa.gov/xQ4bj>.

Vigilant Guard prepares partners for hurricane season

More than 2,000 National Guard personnel from six states and Washington, D.C., took part in the Vigilant Guard 18-3 emergency response exercise May 7-10, 2018, at multiple locations in Virginia. The goal of the exercise was to improve response to a natural disaster and enhance relationships with local, state and federal emergency response partners. It simulated a Category 4 hurricane making landfall in Virginia and exercised how the Virginia National Guard would assist in the state's response with a full mobilization of personnel and coordination to bring in additional National Guard capabilities to help the state's response effort.

"Vigilant Guard was an Olympic-sized event that gave the Joint Force Headquarters – Virginia team the opportunity to learn and experience a massive exercise that stressed the organization so they better understand the challenges we would face in a real world event," said Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. "The massive amount of planning that went into the exercise paid off, and this was one of the largest training events in our history. We brought together units from across the mid-Atlantic region that had never trained together in a situation like this, and this will help us be better prepared as we look at hurricane season starting June 1."

Williams explained that while the Virginia National Guard already has longstanding and strong relationships with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the Virginia State Police and many other state, regional and local emergency response organizations, Vigilant Guard provided an opportunity to expand those partnerships even further. In particular, the Pennsylvania National Guard's Homeland Response Force provides tremendous mission command capabilities, and it was exercised for the first time in Virginia working with multiple Guard chemical response forces.

"The best thing about Vigilant Guard is that it reminded us how important these partnerships are, and how critical the team effort is when it comes to providing the support our fellow Virginians would need in a severe weather situation or any other kind of natural disaster," Williams said.

The Virginia National Guard hosted Vigilant Guard 18-3 in partnership with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and the overall program is sponsored by U.S. Northern Command in conjunction with National Guard Bureau, explained Army Col. Todd Hubbard, the exercise director. It was one of multiple exercises taking place the first two weeks in May as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Level Exercise using a common scenario with more than 250 agencies participating. The Maryland National Guard hosted a Vigilant Guard exercise as well, and other events included NORTHCOM's Ardent Sentry, the U.S. Coast Guard's District 5 Hurricane Exercise, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers North Atlantic Division Hurricane Exercise and U.S. Navy Fleet Forces Command Citadel Gale 2018.

The Virginia National Guard conducts domestic operations as



Virginia National Guard Soldiers assist a simulated casualty to receive chemical decontamination and medical treatment May 8, 2018, at Fort Pickett, Virginia, during the Vigilant Guard 18-3 exercise.

part of a coordinated multi-agency state response, and usually in support of a lead agency like the Virginia State Police, Virginia Department of Transportation or local law enforcement or emergency services organizations. VDEM receives support requests from Virginia localities and the Virginia National Guard is one of many organizations that provides capabilities to help meet their needs.

During the exercise scenario, the JFHQ-VA staff focused on the coordination required to generate response capabilities from outside the state. The Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division was activated as Joint Task Force Omaha and provided mission command for all military operational forces in the state.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/05/12/11402/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Photos: 1033rd Soldiers train on mission essential tasks

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157695188002191>

Photos: State employees recognized at Fort Pickett

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157693741874462>

Photos: Charlie Battery conducts direct fire exercise

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157669001209638/>

Photos: MP students conduct training for MOS qualification

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157695008211411>

Photos: Infantry students train on grenade launchers

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